

Awareness and Education Improve Quality of Care through Better Utilization of Pediatric Palliative Care Services in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit



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INTRODUCTION

- Advances in neonatal care have resulted in improved survival rates.
- There is a need for ongoing support during and after NICU stay for improved Quality of Life (QOL).
- Pediatric Palliative Care (PPC) helps both babies who have poor outcomes as well as those who transition to their homes.
- There is an underutilization of PPC services.

OBJECTIVE

Improve QOL of infants with complex conditions by appropriately utilizing PPC services through an understanding of parental and provider perspectives and education.

METHODS

- Survey of attending physicians in RNICU about PPC perceptions
- Survey of parents about PPC experience
- Educational session on the scope of PPC services
- Review of all consultations 6 months before and 6 months after educational session

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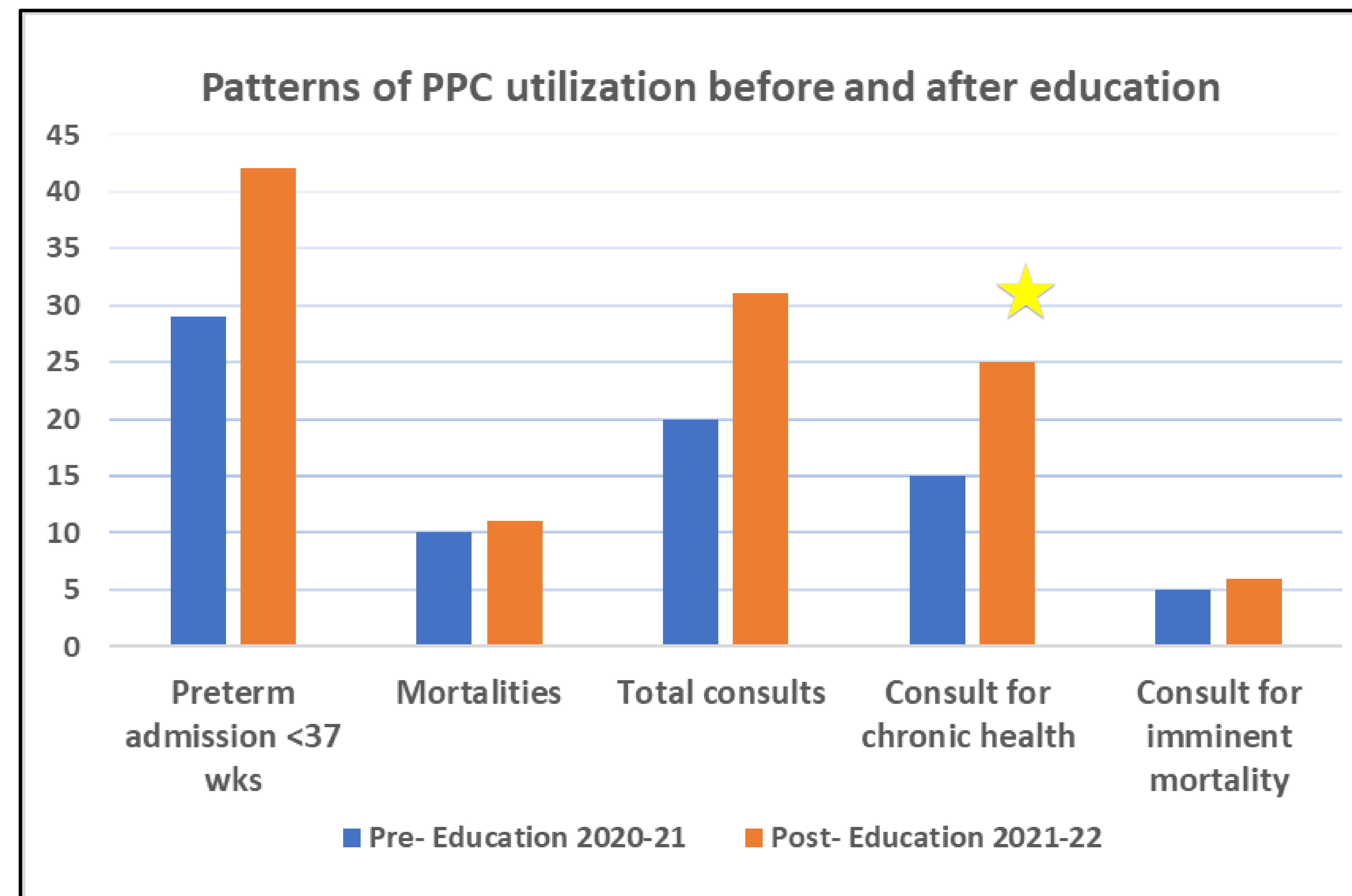


Figure 1. Provider responses to survey



Figure 2. Parent responses to survey

Table 1: Comparison of Number and reasons for PPC consult



★ Increase in PPC consults for chronic health in the NICU

RESULTS

- Provider survey responses (Fig 1)
 - Uncertainty about using automatic trigger criteria.
 - Acknowledged the importance of understanding parental perspectives and receiving PPC education.
- Parent survey responses (Fig 2)
 - PPC provides support, understanding, consistency, and follow-up.
- A review of the number and reasons for PPC consultations for 6 months before and after the educational session.
 - The overall percentage of infants receiving PPC services did not change significantly (69% pre-education vs. 74% post-education).
 - There was an increased trend in consultations for QOL rather than End of Life (EOL) (55% pre-education vs. 81% post-education) (Table 1).

CONCLUSIONS

- Lack of understanding of Pediatric Palliative Care services.
- Education allows for a deeper comprehension of PPC services.
- Curriculum for providers (medical and nursing) must incorporate education about PPC services.
- PPC should be utilized to improve Quality of Life and not only in End-of-Life situations.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- PPC Program ended in 2021.
- References via barcode:

